Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Steps taken during the past year to promote the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the realization of the goals and objectives of the 1995 resolutions on the Middle East

Report submitted by Egypt

General

Pursuant to the report submitted by Egypt to the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (document NPT/CONF.2005/PC.II/9), Egypt has the honor to submit this follow-up report, which sets forth the steps Egypt has taken during the past year to promote the realization of the goals and objectives of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

I. Introduction

Since the First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation on Nuclear Weapons, Egypt has worked continuously to realize the goals and objectives of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

In this context, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free-zone in the Middle East has remained an item of high priority on Egypt's diplomatic agenda, after nearly 30 years of efforts to rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons and of other weapons of mass destruction.

II. Egyptian efforts at the international level

As in past years, Egypt submitted a resolution (58/34) to the General Assembly of the United Nations at its fifty-eighth session on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East. The resolution, which was adopted without a vote, "urges all parties directly concerned to consider seriously taking the practical and urgent steps required for the implementation of the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East in

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accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and, as a means of promoting th objective invites the countries concerned to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nucle Weapons". The resolution furthermore "invites the nuclear-weapons States and all other States render their assistance in the establishment of the zone..."

Egypt, acting on behalf of the States of Members of the United Nations that are Members the League of Arab States, also submitted a resolution (58/68) entitled "The risk of nucle proliferation in the Middle East", which was adopted by an overwhelming majority of Stat Members. The resolution "reaffirms the importance of Israel's accession to the Treaty on the No Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensi International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, in realizing the goal of universal adherence to t Treaty in the Middle East". The resolution calls upon Israel "to accede to the Treaty on the No Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons without further delay and not to develop, produce, test or otherwi acquire nuclear weapons and to renounce possession of nuclear weapons, and to place all unsafeguarded nuclear facilities under full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards an important confidence-building measure among all States of the region and as a step towar enhancing peace and security".

Upon Egypt's initiative, the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency its forty-sixth session once again adopted by consensus, a resolution (GC(47)/RES/13) entitl "Application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East". The resolution "affirms the urgent need for States in the Middle East to forthwith accept the application of full-scope Agency safeguards to their nuclear activities as an important confidence-building measure among all States in the regi and as a step in enhancing peace and security in the context of the establishment of a nuclear-weapo free zone (NWFZ)". The resolution also "calls upon all parties directly concerned to consid seriously taking the practical and appropriate steps required for the implementation of the proposal establish a mutually and effectively verifiable NWFZ in the region..." and upon all States "especial those with a special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, to rend all assistance to the Director-General by facilitating the implementation of this resolution".

The support of the international community for the three aforementioned resolutions evidence of the international community's continuing concern over the risk of nuclear proliferation the Middle East and the urgency surrounding this issue. Egypt regrets, however, that little has be done to translate this sense of urgency into concrete measures.

III. Egyptian efforts at the regional level

At the regional level, Egypt continued to play an active role within the framework of t League of Arab States on issues relating to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapon Thus, it has participated in the adoption of several resolutions on subjects that fall within the scope the Treaty.

Egypt has also played a prominent role in the work of the technical committee charged with formulating a draft treaty on the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of weapon of mass destruction. Two meetings of the Committee were held in Cairo in June 2003 and January 2004.

Egypt also reported in its submission to the Second Session of Preparatory Committee in 2003 that it had participated in a symposium held in Cairo in February 2003 that was jointly organized by the League of Arab States and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). The symposium was entitled "Building a Zone Free Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East: Global Non-Proliferation Regimes and Regional Experiences".

IV. Egyptian effort at the national level

Egypt's strong commitment to the objective of ridding the Middle East of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction was reaffirmed at the national level in an address given by President Hosni Mubarak to a joint session of the Egyptian Parliament on 16 November 2002, in which he said: "We continue to call – insistently – for the same standards to be applied to Israel as are applied to Iraq so that it may abandon all its capabilities in the field of weapons of mass destruction as one of the main elements for a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, and that will also strengthen international efforts to prevent the proliferation of such weapons, in the view of the threat they pose to all mankind".

Also at the national level, and within the context of its comprehensive safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency, Egypt continued to receive IAEA inspection teams throughout the past year. All the inspections showed that Egypt is complying fully with its commitments under the safeguards agreement with the Agency.

V. Conclusion

During the past year, Egypt continued to explore every avenue that could lead to concrete progress in the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free-zone in the Middle East. It believes that others – especially those in the Middle East region – should make an equally strong commitment. In the case of Israel, this commitment has not been forthcoming.

Egypt believes that if the credibility and cohesiveness of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime is to be maintained, the international community must show a greater commitment to the objective of ridding the Middle East of the threat of nuclear weapons, in keeping with its own resolutions and decisions.